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ABSTRACT

Increased pressures continue on faculty in higher education as expressed by faculty workload and faculty activity analysis. Often those who collect and utilize such data do not consider the outcomes of decisions from the faculty viewpoint. Examined are how the uses of certain faculty load data and faculty activity analysis data place pressures and conflicts upon faculty members. The faculty member's consideration should be a variable in decisionmaking. (Author)

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FACULTY LOAD AND FACULTY ACTIVITY ANALYSIS: WHO CONSIDERS THE INDIVIDUAL FACULTY MEMBER

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ABSTRACT

Increased pressures continue upon faculty members in higher education as expressed by faculty workload and faculty activity analysis. Often those who collect and utilize such data do not consider the outcomes of decisions from the faculty member's viewpoint.

The purpose of this paper is to examine how the uses of certain faculty load data and faculty activity analysis data place pressures and conflicts upon faculty members.

The paper is not written to disregard the use of such data, but as an attempt to present the notion that the faculty member's consideration should be a variable in decision making.

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INTRODUCTION

Detailed analysis of faculty workload has increased within many institutions of higher education in the past few decades. This detailed analysis has created greater pressures upon the individual faculty member as he or she operationally proceeds to perform his or her duties. Perhaps more pressures exist upon the individual faculty member today than in most any other period of higher education. Issues of enrollment decline, insecurity of tenure, student evaluations, and production ratios are but a few of the many pressures with which the individual faculty member must contend.

Objectives of higher education have not been developed to the power that all "publics" agree upon the function of an individual faculty member's responsibility. Legislators see faculty as teachers and approve money on that basis. State Boards stress the need to seek comparisons between institutions regarding faculty load. Administrative academic personnel see faculty as instructors, researchers, consultants and public service personnel. Financial personnel see faculty duties only as described by the accounting structure. Administrators, under the trends of management,

want professors to teach a proper load, and seek comparisons between departments and schools and colleges. Students want faculty members to impart knowledge in the classroom and be a counselor in situations exterior to the classroom. And, the faculty member sees himself or herself as needing to be a fine instructor for students, a researcher and publisher for promotions, and a servant for the public. These differing viewpoints of various personnel converge upon the faculty member and cause conflict.

POINTS OF CONFLICT

Many issues in higher education for which decisions have been made invite conflict. The various issues and their magnitude often determine the conflicts that arise, such as faculty negotiations, faculty senate issues, and legislative funding, as well as laws which attempt to regulate the minimum hours taught by individual faculty members.

A few of those issues might be well described herein. Various conflicts are illustrated in Table I. These are not totally exhaustive nor are they mutually exclusive. They are presented herein to illustrate that there are indeed those conflicts that do arise.

One major conflict when displaying faculty activity analysis data is the differences between funding and analysis of what faculty members report by activity. Most budgeting in higher education uses the line item elements of instruction and departmental research. Faculty activity data often displays the activities of instruction, research and scholarship.

TABLE I

A FEW CONFLICTS BETWEEN DIFFERENT PUBLICS' PERCEPTIONS OF FACULTY MEMBERS' DUTIES

A. Different perceptions of funding sources and reporting of faculty activity analysis activities. (Perception of activities versus perception of funding allocation.)

B. Different perceptions regarding research, publication, and public services. (Between funding groups and academic personnel.)

C. Different perceptions of accomplishments for advancements, tenure, and promotions.

D. Different perceptions of faculty load between disciplines.

E. Different perceptions between various organizations about offering academic programs. (Type of programs -- experimental versus traditional.)

F. Different perceptions of offering programs of intellectual quality versus fund allocation.

G. Different perceptions between student credit hour production to hold enrollment versus development of a sound educational program.

H. Different perceptions of what measurement should be utilized to observe faculty workload. (i.e. contact hours, credit hours, full-time faculty per student full-time ratios.)

student oriented services, administrative and public services. Often the legislative and financial personnel conjecture that faculty are only and should only be paid for instruction: a conflict in objectives. (See Table II.)

The different perceptions of the various groups regarding the amount of time to be spent on non-instructional duties has been an area of strife. Various disciplines look at faculty load with different perceptions. For example, music faculty think that their loads should not be as heavy as those in the social sciences. What must be accomplished for advancement, tenure, and promotion is an area where perceptions are often in conflict. The offering of experimental programs versus the traditional can develop into dissension. For example, suppose psychology wished to offer an experimental program versus large classes lecture type program. No doubt the faculty load would be quite different. Perceptions of departments about quality may be an area of conflict between various groups. The lower faculty workload of graduate instruction is such an example.

The loss of enrollment in many institutions has brought about questions regarding faculty load. A continuous search must be made regarding maintaining enrollment levels and how these enrollments effect programs. One other faction may be appropriate to mention and that is the controversy over what unit of measurement should be utilized in faculty workload measurement.

TABLE II

CONFLICT BETWEEN REPORTED ACTIVITIES AND FUNDING

A. Faculty Activity Analysis Example

Average Hours Spent By Department "X"

Contact Hrs.	Prep. Hrs.	Advising Hrs.	Adm.	Research	Prof. Service	Total Hrs.
12.4	15.3	5.3	8.4	5.9	5.1	52.4

B. Instructional and Departmental Research Budget

SALARIES AND WAGES				
Sam Jones	Prof.	9-month	$20,676	
Bob Jones	Assoc. Prof.	9-month	18,765	
Sue Jones	Asst. Prof.	12-month	17,835	
Joe Jones	Instr.	9-month	12,577	
Irregular Help			1,200	71,053
Fringe Benefits--10%			7,105	
Materials and Supplies			1,250	
Telephone			700	
Postage			120	
Capital Outlay			5,400	
Grand Total			$85,628	

SOME PAST HISTORY REGARDING THE CONFLICT

The dilemma of assessing faculty load and, yet, allowing the opportunity for faculty members to operate within a liberal academic atmosphere still exists. From the earlier development of faculty load, Stecklein (1960) writing for the American Council on Education, How to Measure Faculty Work Load, states, that "In the opinion of the author, no attempt should be made to standardize the work load either in terms of numbers of course credits taught, or in terms of a standard number of hours in the work week" (p. 35). Therefore, the dichotomy is to have comparisons, yet not handicap the faculty.

Blackburn (1974) writing in New Directions For Institutional Research, "Assessing Faculty Effort," presents many cases of such conflict. He states the approach of institutional research to faculty workload must be more than a skeletal anatomy.

> The approach of institutional research in breaking down academic work into separate roles and finer and finer phases remains that of analysis, without questioning the validity of the fundamental assumptions that analyzing parts will somehow produce understanding of the whole. p. 76.

His paper goes on to "...challenge the anatomical approach and argues that institutional research efforts to ascertain faculty work load will continue to fail because of basic methodological and conceptual fallacies" (p. 76).

Jedamus(1974), in that same publication, also implies that a different insight into changes needs to be made when he states that "an understanding of those changes and their possible significance can be enhanced through insightful analyses into their origins and development" (p. 34).

Simerly, in his paper presented at the 1975 A.I.R., implied that one of the first developments in improvement of the faculty is to form goals of the faculty member and explain the goals of the institution. Usually, in data analysis, the goals of neither the faculty member nor the institution are considered. Differing goals of publics; legislators, administrators, and faculty members are a real source for conflict and are also significant in data collection and explanation.

A seemingly endless discussion of measurement and use concerning data to be collected continuously takes place. Bogue (1972), states that "Probably no other feature of faculty analysis programs generates more faculty anxiety and conflict than the question of how the data will be used" (p. 112). Measurement is indeed the most serious problem yet to be developed. Many faculty members feel that the faculty activity analysis survey does not justly reflect the manner of their productivity. The goal of the use of such data also poses some difficulty. Often student credit hours per full-time faculty equivalent is used to measure the faculty workload. Durham (1960), and Doi (1961), imply that this is the best single measure.

Yet, Toombs (1973), has stated that perhaps this ratio emphasizes mainly the instructional endeavors and fails to look at such things as research time and administration time activities. The main concept then that is to be made herein, is that data collected for one purpose too often is utilized for making decisions which are essentially unrelated. Another such example is only to observe and study credit hours taught by a faculty member. Those faculties within areas that employ laboratory teaching methods would argue that perhaps, the use of contact hours should be utilized. There are those who indicate that one should view student credit hours through student contact hours. Perhaps a way to summarize this conflict is to say that no one measure of productivity has been generally accepted as paramount. Secondly, we must be particularly careful not to use data in the main for other than the purpose of the collection intent.

SUGGESTIONS FOR REDUCING PRESSURES

The following suggestions are inferred by the authors through experience with past operations. There may be many other areas to consider, but these are those which appear to be major at this point in time.

Communication: Communicate with the academic areas about the function for collection of such data and relate uses of such. This area of communication could be utilized to relieve the great anxiety of faculty as to how such data will be utilized. Perhaps a face to face discussion should

be held with main administrative personnel. If one can be involved at the departmental level, it would be a positive step.

Illustrate How Data May Be Supportative: Illustrate to the academic community how such data can be supportative of their mission. One method is to possibly convey either planning to reduce workloads in what appears to be heavy loads in certain departments. Also, it may illustrate those areas where workload is light.

Collect Supportative Data From The Literature: Even though data from other sources may need to be studied with caution, comparative data allows one to make somewhat objective evaluations with what others have found.

Collect Data From A Comparable Institution: Often it helps if one can describe comparable institutions and collect data relative to their workload. Perhaps a set of ten similar institutions, selected by a set of criteria, with which to compare can be valuable. Caution should be maintained for there are those who imply that there is no such thing as two totally comparable institutions.

Understand The Academic Role Of Faculty: Seek to understand how the academic role of personnel on your campus should function. Do not become immersed in the computer development, the detail of analysis and quantitative elements to the point that one loses sight of the main functions of an academic institution. Students must gain a quality education. Research in proper quantities should be considered

and student and administrative duties must be performed.

Generalizations: Care must be taken to not become so engrossed in individual data that grouped data becomes lost. Generalizing from one or two samples violates research methodology. It is wise to collect, assess, and evaluate data over a period of time. Perhaps before real decision making should occur, at least three sets of data should be analyzed.

Involve Yourself In Standard Setting: If at all possible, view standard setting with a very critical eye. If standards are being set, be sure to point out the pitfalls and attempt to protect the faculty against unreasonable limitations or restrictions.

Provide Information: Attempt to provide faculty with results. Attempt to relate outcomes of the data. Reports should be sent to those involved, at least to the departmental level as well as deans, directors, vice presidents, and presidents. Discussion and analysis by many may mean that additional planning adjustments may be made at the appropriate levels of administration.

Involvement: A great deal of involvement should be made in planning, analyses, and decision making based upon such studies. If faculty members can be involved in such discussions, fears and pressures can be somewhat released. An open logical discussion of the issue has tremendous value. Key personnel should be involved. However, recall that at times the democratic process breaks down and a decision maker must make a judgement and proceed.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The intent of this paper was to present conflicts between perceptions of faculty members and other "publics" which influence higher education. Conflicts of differences in perceptions regarding fund allocation and activities which faculty view as their responsibility were presented.

Many of these conflicts are basically the difference in perceived objectives of higher education. In order to reduce certain of the conflicts between faculty and the different "publics" suggestions were given. Such items as communication, support data of the faculty, being involved in standard setting and having faculty involvement in utilizing faculty load data as well as faculty activity analyses were presented.

The institutional researcher must be as objective as possible about use of such data and should have the interest of not only the administration relative to proper management but, must also suggest that the individual faculty member's interest must be observed. Since the major endeavor of higher education is maintained for student learning, questions of how best can loads of faculty members contribute to that student learning should be sought. Elements of efficiency and effectiveness should be in balance, but if an imbalance does exist, let us hope that one has the courage to defend effectiveness.

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